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June 21, 1996

Writer's Direct Dial Number
(202) 887-8745

By Messenger

William F. Caton, Acting Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED

JUN 21 1996

Re: *Ex Parte Presentation, MM Docket No. 93-48*

Federal Communications Commission
Office of Secretary

Dear Mr. Caton:

On June 20, 1996, Jamie Kellner, of The WB Television Network, faxed the attached article to Chairman Reed E. Hundt, Commissioners James H. Quello, Susan Ness and Rachelle B. Chong, and Roy J. Stewart, Chief of the Mass Media Bureau.

Please associate the attached article with this docket.

If you have any questions regarding this filing, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 887-8745.

Very truly yours,

Diane S. Killory /JHJ

Diane S. Killory
Counsel to The WB Television Network

Enclosure

CC: Chairman Reed E. Hundt
Commissioner James H. Quello
Commissioner Susan Ness
Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong
Roy J. Stewart

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TO: Commissioner Jim Quello

FAX #: 202-418-2802

FROM: Jamie Kellner

DATE: June 20, 1996

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Please don't forget how important interstitials can be to feeding good information into young minds.

JK/dw



TO: Commissioner Susan Ness

FAX #: 202-418-2821

FROM: Jamie Kellner

DATE: June 20, 1996

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TO: Commissioner Rachelle Chong

FAX #: 202-418-2820

FROM: Jamie Kellner

DATE: June 20, 1996

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JK/dw



TO: **Chairman Reed Hundt**

FAX #: **202-418-2801**

FROM: **Jamie Kellner**

DATE: **June 20, 1996**

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TO: Roy Stewart, Chief Mass Media Bureau

FAX #: 202-418-2828

FROM: Jamie Kellner

DATE: June 20, 1996

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CALENDAR

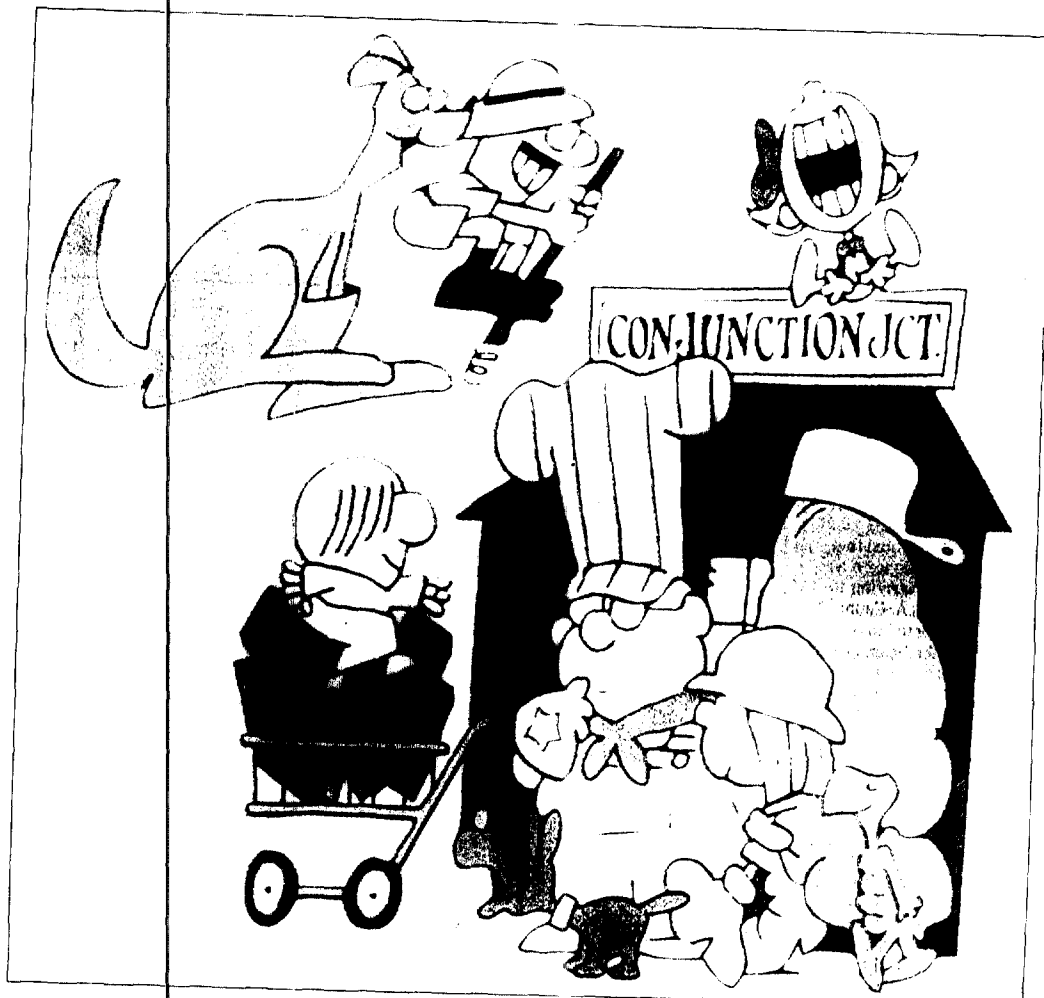
Los Angeles Times

TICKET ALERT

Hey, man, it's like the '70s again. These men of makeup, **KISS**, sold out two nights at the Forum, so an Aug. 25 show has been added. Tickets go on sale Sunday at 10 a.m. The tour features frontman Gene Simmons and the other three original members, who also took part in Saturday's KROQ Weenie Roast.

AL SCHABEN / Los Angeles Times

SECTION F • THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 1996



"Conjunction Junction" is part of "Schoolhouse Rock," which became a staple of ABC's Saturday mornings in the '70s.

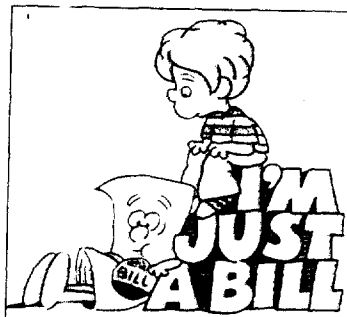
'Rock' of Ages

Long a Gen-X favorite, ABC's 'Schoolhouse Rock' is still hooking up viewers with music and learning.

By STEVE HOCHMAN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Veteran jazz musician Bob Dorough sat at a table in the Silver Lake club Spaceland recently, intently poring over sheet music, trying to nail down the words and tunes to songs he was to perform in just a matter of minutes.

"These kids know the songs better than I do," the 72-year-old Dorough said, nodding his ponytailed noggin in the direction of three twentysome



tors and wrote several of the songs. "I can go into any bar and if the waitress or bartender is under 35, I can simply say 'Conjunction Junction' and they'll reply. 'What's your function?' I've won a lot of \$10 bets with that."

And with that coming-of-age of people who in their youth were fed a steady diet of "Schoolhouse Rock," the series is experiencing a remarkable renaissance.

ABC, with its children's programming division now staffed with some of that very generation, revived the se-

'ROCK'

Continued from F1

available. That comes on the heels of "Schoolhouse Rock Rocks," an album of new versions of the songs by such young music figures as the Lemonheads, rapper Skee-Lo and the band Blind Melon, whose "Three Is a Magic Number" was the group's last recording before the October cocaine overdose death of singer Shannon Hoon. (MTV will show a special on the album's making this weekend.)

"We had the 'Schoolhouse Rock' videos on our tour bus for years, really bad bootleg copies before they released the official versions," Blind Melon guitarist Rogers Stevens says. "That was a song we were planning on possibly recording anyway. So when they approached us about the album, it was something we really wanted to do."

On the surface, this phenomenon is just one more in a string of Gen-X nostalgia revivals à la "The Brady Bunch" rediscovery of recent years. In fact, just as that TV series was brought back to unlikely life as an off-Broadway theater presentation with irony-laden productions from real scripts, "Schoolhouse Rock" was turned into a musical revue by the small Chicago company the Body Politic, which last year took the production to New York.

"It was like going to 'The Rocky Horror Picture Show,' with everyone singing along," says Newall, who is executive producer of the new series along with Yohe, who was also his partner in the original productions.

"The Simpsons" also paid hom-

age recently, with a spot-on take-off of "I'm Just a Bill" recast as "I'm an Amendment"—which skewered special-interest groups trying to place their views into the Constitution.

But there's more to this revival than mere nostalgia. "Schoolhouse Rock" actually taught Gen-Xers useful information in ways that conventional education could not.

Newall says that, not long ago, he was approached by a young Canadian-born woman who, thanking him profusely, explained that she never could have passed her U.S. citizenship test without the "Schoolhouse Rock" song of the preamble to the Constitution. In fact, it was a clerk at the immigration office who suggested that she use the "Schoolhouse" video as a study aid.

"I guess the dimension of melody is something that gives the learning process a boost," says Dorrough, who was brought to the project by Newall to serve as musical director.

But that's clear to anyone trying to say the alphabet without humming the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." The "Schoolhouse Rock" method is to flesh out each lesson with personality. That was the directive that Dorrough remembers coming straight from McCaffrey & McCall's David McCall—the person who first had the idea for an educational song series—when they first met. "David McCall said, 'Don't write down to the kids.'"

Linda Steiner was a kid in the '70s, and now, at 33, as vice president of ABC Children's Television, recalls that what stuck with her was not just the facts but the

stories of the "Schoolhouse" clips, especially "I'm Just a Bill," written by Frishberg to explain the legislative process.

"For my brother and me, that was our favorite song of these," Steiner says. "I identified with the bill being lonely as he sat on the steps of Congress waiting to become a law."

And as a result, it's made unlikely Gen-X heroes out of Dorrough, Frishberg and trumpeter-singer-actor Jack Sheldon, the main voice of "Conjunction Junction" and "I'm Just a Bill."

They all perform "Schoolhouse" songs in their jazz club sets, and all report that these days those are the

songs that get them the most response. And they also find fans in very unexpected places.

"I've known Clint Eastwood for about 20 years now, and he's always liked me," Sheldon says. "But when his new wife [thirtysomething Salinas newscaster Dina Ruiz] met me and found out I'd done 'Conjunction Junction,' she started screaming. It gave Clint a whole new perspective toward me. He looked at me with more respect."

■ *MTV will air a special on the making of the "Schoolhouse Rock Rocks" album Friday at 4:30 p.m. with repeats Saturday (2 and 9:30 p.m.) and Sunday (9:30 a.m. and 5 and 11:30 p.m.).*